

persecution in the divided and troubled countries that it is designed to condemn. Although the sanctions in the bill have been watered down during the many months this legislation was stalled in the International Relations Committee, the premise and structure of H.R. 2431 remain fundamentally flawed.

The bill creates a mid-level bureaucracy within the State Department, the "Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring," which would have extraordinary powers to publicly condemn and sanction a wide range of countries important to U.S. national security interests. The "Office Director" would be charged with identifying countries that engage in or tolerate religious persecution. Countries named as violators would be subject to an arbitrary, "one size fits all" list of trade sanctions including denial of U.S. foreign assistance, denial of visas, and prohibitions on U.S. exports and U.S. support for multilateral development bank assistance.

The danger is that sanctions are automatic, can be waived by the President only in very narrow, extraordinary circumstances, and are limited to one year. Contrary to statements made by the bill's proponents, H.R. 2431 contains no authority for the President to waive sanctions if he determines that they would result in the loss of American jobs or otherwise have an adverse impact on U.S. economic interests. Under the bill, sanctions would be imposed on many governments that are important to U.S. trade, security and foreign policy interests. These countries include Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Morocco.

The supporters of H.R. 2431 say that this bill will force foreign governments to improve their treatment of religious minorities and help alleviate egregious human rights abuses. Yet they fail to offer any evidence that this bill would be effective in achieving its intended result.

In truth, the call for passing H.R. 2431 is not coming from persecuted religious minorities throughout the world. Indeed, many prominent religious leaders from countries this bill is designed to target recently traveled to Washington to warn us that the bill would only further divide them from the societies in which they live and struggle to worship freely. These leaders, such as the Rev. Canon Clement Janda, General Secretary of the All Africa Council of Churches and a native Sudanese Anglican priest, and The Rev. Dr. Joseph Pattiasina, General Secretary of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia, told me in the strongest possible terms that H.R. 2431 would exacerbate tensions between Christians and Muslims in their respective countries.

Christians and clergy working in China, Saudi Arabia and Egypt say that the bill would make their plight worse, not better. For example, the United Church of Christ, which has supported missionary work for decades in many Middle Eastern countries, writes: "By using U.S. power to accuse all Muslim countries of religious persecution, . . . radical Muslims will be strengthened in their efforts to associate Christianity with the West." Religious minorities and missionaries who have dedicated their lives to Christian education abroad fear that their work will be undermined because their host governments will blame them for the imposition of sanctions under this bill.

Rev. Billy Graham's son, Nelson Graham, who heads a large, successful Christian missionary program in China, wrote to urge Con-

gress to reconsider this legislation because of the potential harm it could do to both American missionaries and to indigenous religious organizations in China, as well as in other targeted countries. He believes these groups were given no opportunity to participate in the development of H.R. 2431.

The National Council of Churches, which represents 34 Protestant denominations (including the Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians) with an aggregate membership of 53 million Americans, also strongly opposes this legislation because it does not take into account the concerns of a broad spectrum of religious leaders who are "on the ground" fighting religious persecution overseas.

Mr. Chairman, unilateral trade sanctions are dangerous because they appeal to an emotional need in all of us to condemn reprehensible behavior in the strongest possible terms. Yet history has shown that unilateral trade sanctions rarely, if ever, succeed in changing rogue behavior.

In my view, the United States has been the most successful in advancing our values of religious freedom and democracy by remaining active in countries where these principles are not well-established. A policy of engagement fosters expanded opportunities to spread the Christian message through direct contacts that would be denied to us if we pursue a policy of isolating countries through punitive economic sanctions.

Because there is strong evidence that the sanctions proposed in this bill would do more harm than good to religious minorities and American missionaries working abroad, I am opposed to H.R. 2431.

HONORING BILLIE CARR ON HER 70TH BIRTHDAY

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Billie Carr of Houston for her abiding commitment to making our democracy work for all Americans as she celebrates her 70th birthday on June 1, 1998. Known fondly as "Boss" and "The Godmother" Billie Carr is a political legend. She has been active in local, state, and national politics since 1952, influencing our nation's leaders at all levels and inspiring countless others to become involved in public service.

A native Houstonian, Billie Carr started her political involvement in 1952, working for candidates like Ralph Yarborough and Adlai Stevenson. She has been involved in every political campaign since, helping to elect candidates for every office from precinct chair to president.

Billie was elected in 1954 to the Harris County Democratic Executive Committee from her precinct, a position she has held ever since. She served on the State Democratic Executive Committee from 1964 to 1966 and remains an ex-officio member.

In 1956, Billie started working with Mrs. R.D. "Frankie" Randolph and has offered a unique approach to organizing at the grassroots level ever since. As a thankful student and gracious mentor, Billie perpetuates that experience by presenting Frankie Awards to noted Democratic organizers every year.

In 1972, Billie was elected to serve on the Democratic National Committee, and she was elected to her fifth term in 1992. The Southern Region of the Democratic National Committee elected Billie to represent them on the Executive Committee of the DNC in 1988. She was reelected in 1993, and continues to serve in that capacity today. She served on the National Resolutions Committee from 1984 to 1988, the National Platform Committee from 1983 to 1984, and the National Fairness Committee from 1984 to 1986.

In all that she has done, Billie Carr has been a leader, organizer, and innovator. Known for her liberal politics, Billie is a charter member and organizer of the Harris County Democrats and the Texas Democrats.

Billie Carr's activism and leadership have won her many well-deserved awards. She received the National New Democratic Committee's prestigious Eleanor Roosevelt Award in 1986. In 1987, she received the Harris County Democrats Lifetime Achievement Award. The Texas Democratic Women presented her with their certificate in 1992, and the National Federation of Democratic Women gave her their Star Award in 1993.

While many have benefited from the two books Billie has published, along with numerous articles and classes, there is no better way to learn about political campaigns than to work with her, as many have been so fortunate to do over the years. In addition to her many successful campaigns and the subsequent successes in public office of those she helped to elect, perhaps Billie Carr's most important legacy is the many campaign workers and volunteers who have been inspired by her to continue in public service.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join Billie Carr's family and friends and all those she has inspired in honoring her on the occasion of her 70th birthday and commending her on a lifetime of achievement. May the coming years bring good health, happiness, and time to enjoy her three sons, their families, and her grandchildren, as well as further political successes.

TRIBUTE TO ANTHONY FIORELLO

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention Anthony Fiorello of Wayne, New Jersey who is being honored this evening by the Borough of West Paterson for his service as Municipal Court Judge.

Tony was born on May 11, 1940. A resident of Passaic County, he graduated from Passaic Valley High School in 1958 whereupon he entered Seton Hall University as an undergraduate student in Political Science. Tony graduated in 1962 with a B.A. in Political Science and in the top 10 percent of his class with a 3.3 G.P.A.

At Seton Hall, Tony was involved in many campus activities including President of the TKE fraternity, varsity-lettered athlete in fencing (selected to E.C.A.C. Championship tournament, Deputy Brigade Commander—ROTC Brigade, and Distinguished Military Student. He also received the University Cross and Crescent Award for Outstanding Achievement